1:Wilson E-5 (1934-1938)1951 FN17 Ngonde FN17
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planted at the break of the rains, and of the new crop, rice, is a seed-bed of ash prepared, and then it is grass and scrub which is burned; they do not fell or pollard trees to provide ash. For other crops there is no burning; the weeds are hoed in green instead; and, at a second hoeing before planting, the earth is piled into ridges or mounds to ensure drainage. Formerly, it is said, the chiefs insisted that the ridges on slopes should be made contour-wise, and recently this law has been revived. Elton, the first European to travel through the area, observed that there was 'terraced cultivation everywhere';[1] and the ridges do in fact look like terracing from a distance.

Hoeing is the work of men and boys; only quite recently have a few women, whose husbands are away in European employment, begun to hoe for themselves. And most men hoe for three or four hours a day during the greater part of the year, for crops are planted in succession. Neither old age nor high status excuses a man from this duty. Even the chief Mwaipopo, who was already grown up when the Europeans arrived in his country, hoed regularly in his fields during the years 1935–8. Iron hoes were made by Nyakyusa smiths from iron obtained from the Kinga,[2] but they were scarce, and some men had to use wooden hoes such as many of the women still have for weeding (*vide* Plate VII). The women are solely responsible for sowing, weeding, and reaping.

Cattle are fairly numerous:[3] few men over twenty-five nowadays own none, and many older men have four or five cows in their stalls. Long ago, we were told, cattle were scarcer, some men having to marry without them, but Cotterill (1876)[4] and Kerr-Cross (1890)[5] both said 'cattle abound' in Nyakyusa coun-

on 'Wanyakyusa Agriculture' (*The East African Agricultural Journal*, April 1944), states that 'though the soil is not being eroded to any great extent it is still being impoverished'.

[1] Elton, op. cit., pp. 326, 330.

[2] Thomson, op. cit., Vol. I, pp. 272–3. Possibly iron was also obtained from the west. Kerr Cross (op. cit. p. 289) saw large foundries in Nyika country before 1890. cf. Elton, op. cit., p. 321 and map at the end.

[3] No census of the cattle in the district had been taken when we were among the Nyakyusa. D. H. Thwaites, op. cit., states that, 'The number of cattle in the district (Rungwe) in the 1941 census was about 2.3 head per taxpayer or 55 head per square mile'.

[4] H. B. Cotterill, 'On the Nyasa and a Journey from the North End to Zanzibar', *Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society*, Vol. XXII (1878).

[5] D. Kerr-Cross, 'Crater-lakes north of Lake Nyassa', *The Geographical Journal*, Vol. V (1895), p. 129.

1:Wilson E-5 (1934-1938)1951 FN17 Ngonde FN17
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it is implied that coffee planted in the chiefdoms will be inherited by a man's heirs. As a leading Christian woman put it: 'We like to build on this side of the river because the other is mission land, and if a man moves he loses the coffee and everything else he has planted there. . . . A man has children and he wishes his children to inherit what he has planted.' The number of coffee-trees each man may plant on mission land is also limited to 100, so that the development of large plantations, such as some astute Nyakyusa are undertaking, is impossible there.

*b. Building*

When a group of boys starts a new village two or three friends usually combine to erect a little hut and live in it together. As younger boys join the village the older ones instruct and help their juniors to build. Thus, although as they grow older each boy builds a hut for himself, the habit of co-operation with village-mates in construction is already established. Until they are married, boys do all the work on their huts for themselves, fetching their own reeds or bamboos for the frame, and cutting and carrying thatching grass. They usually leave their huts unmudded. Adult men, on the other hand, are helped by their wives and female relatives as well as by sons and sons-in-law, and one or two of their own village neighbours. Men fell the bamboos, construct the framework of the house, and thatch, while women cut and carry grass, carry bamboos, mould the mud bricks which are packed between the bamboo uprights, and plaster the hut inside. The wife for whom the hut is being built is responsible for the women's work, but she usually gets some help from her co-wives and women neighbours, as well as from her mother and sisters, and the mother and sisters of her husband. Sons and sons-in-law are expected to bring with them other young men, their village-mates. Co-operation is thus both with relatives and village neighbours—the neighbours of the couple building the hut, and of their sons and sons-in-law.

The huts of married men are built with immense care, for not only are substantial houses essential to comfort, and indeed a condition of survival, in this climate of torrential rains and cold winter mists, but the Nyakyusa take great pride in the appearance of their homesteads (*vide infra*, p. 77). The early European

1:Wilson E-5 (1934-1938)1951 FN17 Ngonde FN17
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time, and providing meat feasts at funerals and at the initiation and marriage of daughters.

As it is proper for men to eat with their equals it is improper for them to eat with their juniors, or with women. In the past fathers and sons never ate or drank together. Nowadays they sometimes do so, even though conservative pagans, especially if the fathers and sons have been working together. Three reasons are adduced for the change: first, the example of Europeans and Swahili; secondly, the fact that the country is at peace and it is safe for all the men to drink together, whereas formerly, when there was constant danger of attack, the young men were forbidden to drink at all; and thirdly the fact that young men earn money and buy beer for themselves which they may invite a 'father' to share (*vide* Document p. 194). When the Nyakyusa drink beer they replenish the pot repeatedly with boiling water, and men expect to have the water boiled for them by a woman. As Mwambuputa explained, 'Sometimes my son brings his pot (of beer) to my place and calls his friends saying: "We will take the pot to mother's house and she will pour in water for us." Then they come to my place, and they invite me to drink, and I accept, and we drink together. How can I grudge my son beer when I have some? Did he and his friends not entertain me?' The change turns on the fact that a young man can earn money and buy beer for himself while yet unmarried. Formerly no unmarried man commanded millet for brewing. Now, when he is drinking in his father's homestead he cannot but invite his father to join him.

Women commonly eat alone with their young children and unmarried daughters. Sometimes co-wives who are good friends eat together, but they have no obligation to do so, and in a big homestead perhaps only two wives will eat together and each of the others eat alone. More usually a woman sends a dish of food to each co-wife to eat in her own hut. For a woman to eat food with a man is considered quite impossible. In those families in which men no longer ate with neighbours one or two ate with their young sons, but we heard of none who ate with their wives. The example of Europeans did not influence them to this extent.

It is admitted that women also enjoy company and profit from it, and it is considered good that they should get on with their fellows, but there is no suggestion that it is a woman's duty to

1:Wilson E-5 (1934-1938) 1951 FN17 Ngonde FN17
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cultivate her mind by conversation, or to eat regularly in company. In more formal hospitality there is the same difference; a woman never invites her friends to drink beer with her, or to a 'dinner party', as her husband must do if he is to have prestige with his neighbours. Women only share the ritual feasts at initiation and marriage, and at death.

There are local variations in Nyakyusa rituals, notably between the Kukwe and Nyakyusa proper. But everywhere there is an obligation to provide feasts at the funerals and marriages of dependants. When his wife or unmarried child dies, a man must kill cattle for his relatives and neighbours to feast at the burial,[1] while an heir provides a feast for his relatives, and the neighbours of the 'father' from whom he has inherited. At these feasts equal portions of meat are allotted to relatives and neighbours—or were so allotted until the rights of neighbours to meat at funerals were formally limited (*vide infra*, p. 93). An heir must also brew beer, or kill a bull, to feast the deceased's neighbours when he begins to cohabit with his widow, or moves the property from his village. At the initiation and marriage of a girl there is a series of feasts (five in Selya), the food for which is provided partly by the groom's family and partly by the bride's; and if, as is usual, the bride is still a virgin or has been deflowered by the groom himself, he must provide a bull in thanks for her virginity (*engambako jabusungu*), which is killed to feast the neighbours and relatives of her parents. The carcass is divided into three portions, one for the immediate neighbours of her father (men), one for 'those relatives with whom the father is on good terms and exchanges cattle', and one for the 'mothers' of the bride. Women as well as men eat meat and other fine food at all the marriage and funeral feasts.

The third occasion on which a feast for the village neighbours is thought to be essential is when a man or woman has offended his (or her) neighbours, or the neighbours of a 'father'. Thus a woman who has shirked her duty of advising on the division of her brother's inheritance, and is disapproved of by her neighbours on this account, begs pardon of them over a brewing of beer (*vide infra*, pp. 107, 236); a son, having insulted his father's neighbours

[1] For the circumstances under which other relatives must provide cattle for funeral feasts see Godfrey Wilson, 'Nyakyusa Conventions of Burial', *Bantu Studies*, Vol. XIII (1939), p. 18.

3: Mackenzie M-5 (ca. 1925) 1925
FN17 Ngonde FN17



sheer hard work makes men and women look thin and haggard. Work stops about noon; the women go home to attend to the food, the men to see to the cattle which the smaller boys have been looking after during the day. The milking is always done by the men; it is not women's work as with us. If there are flies about, and there usually are, the cows need no invitation to thrust their heads into the column of acrid smoke that arises from a dung fire, kindled for the purpose. The rest of the afternoon is filled either with small duties, basket mending, net work, some slight repairs to a canoe, rope making, house repairing; or it may be there is a lawsuit to be settled, and every idler will make a point of being present.

By the time food is over, night has closed in. If the night is dark, one after another slips away with a friendly "May you sleep well," and silence reigns until morning. Unless it is suddenly broken by the roar of a lion or the growl of a leopard; and then the young men, who sleep with the cattle, rush out with spears and clubs and wild shouting to drive off the intruder, while the others raise a weird cry within the houses. Should the lion take refuge in a thicket and refuse to be driven off, a small party may slip round to the nearest white man, if he is not too far away, to beg him either to lend them a rifle, or to come himself to their aid. In the warm moonlight nights, however, other noises fill the ear. The young people gather for a dance, and the drum fills the night air with its interminable tum tum tum, now soft and

5:Wilson E-5 (1934-1938)1938 FN17 Ngonde FN17
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The Nyakyusa are, predominantly, a patrilineal people, for inheritance normally follows the male line. They differ, however, from the patrilineal peoples of Europe in that brothers inherit before sons. Inherited wealth is thus mainly kept in the hands of the older men, though they are under certain obligations towards their " sons " (whether own or classificatory) in their use of it. Marriage involves a transfer of anything from four to thirty head of cattle from the bridegroom to his father-in-law, and consequently the chief obligation which an older man has, both to his own sons and to the sons of any kinsman from whom he has inherited, is to provide them, in due time, with cattle for marriage. But this obligation is not an absolute one, it depends, in part, upon the due fulfilment by each " son " of his filial duties, which are, firstly, to hoe his father's fields diligently and, secondly, to maintain a respectful bearing towards him. Unmarried men have no gardens of their own, they work their fathers' land and eat the produce of it which their mothers cook.

Under modern conditions money for tax and clothes is necessary both to father and son, and very many young men visit the nearby Lupa gold fields regularly, for periods of a few months at a time, to earn it. A youth who always brings back to his parents after each spell of absence tax money and some presents is held to have done all his duty and he will be given marriage cattle just as soon and as readily as if he had spent all his time hoeing at home. And if he earns more, sufficient to purchase some of his marriage cattle for himself, still his father benefits, for the old man has then to spend fewer beasts from his own stock. But the Lupa needs food as well as labour and some unmarried men stay continuously at home and engage in the production of crops ; after the family needs have been met the surplus is sold and from the proceeds the father pays his own tax and his sons' and buys clothes for them as well.

Hoeing, which is the hardest part of Nyakyusa cultivation, is normally done by men, planting ; weeding, reaping and cooking by women. But some women nowadays do some hoeing too—if their husbands are away at work or if for any other reason they find it difficult to get enough ground prepared for them. Traditionally, I was told, women never used a hoe at all.

Polygyny is the rule rather than the exception among middle-aged men, and in a polygynous household, as we shall see, each wife has her own garden plots. The institution of polygyny has many other elements besides the economic, but the economic is not the least important of them: the taking of additional wives is the best capital investment which is open to an ordinary, uneducated, Nyakyusa peasant. A Nyakyusa wife is not her husband's property, she is his wife ; but as family relationships are, among the Nyakyusa, the basis of economic activity, so the more wives

9: Wilson E-5 (1934-1955) 1959
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their wives took to wearing cloth they should earn it for themselves by growing and selling millet and brewing beer, and many women do the clearing and hoeing in their fields, work that used to fall to men; but it is difficult for a chief to refuse to provide a man to hoe the ridges in his wife's field, or to refuse an elderly woman a cloth or some salt, and young heirs grumble much about their encumbrances.

In the political field there has been a sustained attempt to make local government more democratic and to include in it the educated men. Between 1891, when the German Government first assumed control of the area, and 1938, the tendency was for the power of the chiefs to be increased at the expense of that of the commoners. This was admitted by the chiefs themselves, as we have seen. In 1949 there was established a system of Rural Councils, on which chiefs, village headmen (*amafumu*), and ordinary commoners are represented. Four[1] of each category are chosen as representatives on the Council in their area by an electoral college itself elected by all taxpayers. Rungwe District is divided into five areas. The policy of treating some chiefs as senior to others has been abandoned and each of the seventy-eight recognized rulers (*abatwa*) is eligible for election as a chief's representative on his local Rural Council. Village headmen (two from each chiefdom) and the ordinary commoners are similarly chosen. The five Rural Councils in turn elect one man of each sort to the District Council.[2] The system allows for, and seems to have achieved, a combination of men with traditionally high status and those who are conspicuous by reason of their education or success as coffee or rice farmers. The old feeling that education was not necessary to a chief's son, though it might be useful to a poor man, has vanished, and a considerable number of the educated leaders of the district are sons or grandsons of chiefs. The elected president of the District Council, Mr. Gordon Mwansasu (186) is of the Nyakyusa chiefs' lineage, though not of the most senior line. In the Rural Councils the presidents elected have all, with one exception, been ruling chiefs, but it is not necessarily the genealogically senior who is chosen. There is scope for selection on the grounds of character and ability.

[1] Five in the populous plain, Ntebela (MuNgonde).

[2] cf. Z. E. Kingdon, 'The Initiation of a System of Local Government by African Rural Councils in Rungwe District of Tanganyika', *Journal of African Administration*, vol. iii, 4 (1951).

137 in thickness. This part is devoid of timber except along some river banks—*Albizzia* and *Acacia* spp.—and fuel has to be carried some distance. The dominant herbs are *Crotalaria striata* and *Hyparrhenia* sp., with *Phragmites* and *Pennisetum purpureum* along the rivers.

*Methods of Cultivation*

241 The work of cultivation is equally divided between the sexes. After the plots have been 462 cleared and hand-hoed by the men, it is women's work to plant, clear, harvest, winnow and sell at the market. Men's work consists of clearing, hoeing and looking after the cattle.

242 Rotation of crops is practised, as it must be in an area where all land is far from pro- 241 ductive. In the highlands, 9,500 feet to 5,000 feet, the rotation in valleys is sweet potatoes, finger millet, groundnuts, finger millet, groundnuts, finger millet and rest for five years, or sweet potatoes, maize for five years and rest for five years. On the hillsides, finger millet and pigeon pea or finger millet alone are sown every fourth year.

In the medium altitudes, between 5,000 feet and 2-3,000 feet, the rotation is finger millet, maize and yams, beans, rested and grazed. Continual planting of rice cannot take place as fertility is so quickly impaired.

In the lower altitudes, below 2,000 feet, rice is planted continuously for some 15 years and the land is then rested and grazed for about 8 years.

*Diet and Food Crops*

262 No one food is the staple throughout the district, but plantains, maize and sweet potatoes for the higher altitudes and rice on the lake shore are generally eaten, with additions that vary from area to area.

243 Maize is planted both on contoured ridges and on flat land. Holes are drilled generally 3 feet apart and each hole has 3 seeds planted [241] in it. Maize is usually interplanted with beans or Bambarra groundnuts, groundnuts, cowpeas or pigeon peas. Planting takes place in the highlands in July to September and harvesting in February to April. In the medium altitudes, two crops are planted annually, in November to February and again in May to June. In the lower altitudes, however, little maize is grown [251] and this is sown in November to December and harvested in March and April. Maize is stored in mud-covered basket granaries or is [262] sold as soon as it is dried. It is eaten roasted or boiled with beans. The varieties of maize grown vary but they are mostly of the hard flint type.

12: Bisgaard E-5 (1955) 1962 FN17 Ngonde FN17
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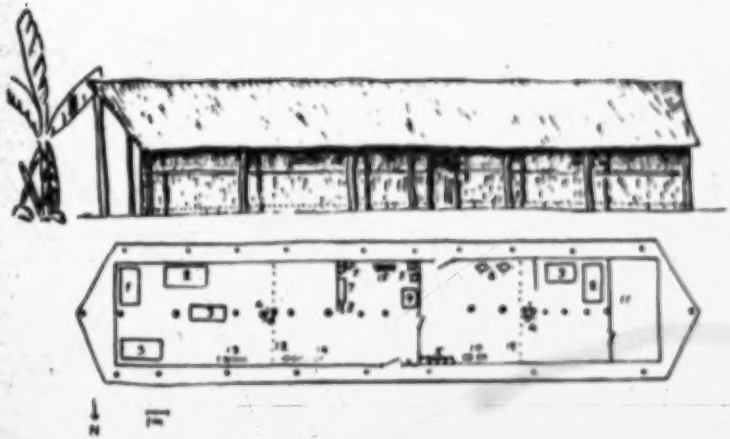

An ikhaya in the village of Kisondela, the district of Rungwale, belonging to a man with two wives. The rooms have bamboo ceilings from dotted lines to either gable. Posts reaching to ridge of roof are filled in. 1, husband's bed; 2, wife's bed; 3, child's bed; 4, hearth; 5, hens' nests; 6, water jar; 7, roost; 8, ladder; 9, table; 10, stools; 11, store-room; 12, dotted lines show limitation of ceiling; 13, small objects; 14, working material; 15, sleeping mat.

born. On page 357, he reports how the boys, when 7 or 10 years old, will leave their parents' house to live in long, rectangular cowhouse-like houses big or small, in a special youngsters' quarter at the far end of the village. On page 358 he writes: In many cases you do not know for certain whether you are dealing with a youngsters' house or a cowhouse—for the cattle may well be kept in these houses—or the herdsmen may sleep in the cowhouses. However, this mostly holds true of the low-lying Konde country, while on the other hand, in the high country, the cattle is usually kept in the dwelling houses. On pages 371 and 372, he relates how the cattle is tied to posts at night, and he shows a picture of a cowhouse.

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He also refers (on page 376) to the use of the rectangular house for married men besides the boys. The difference is seen in the fact that these houses are not roughcast with mud, as this work is the province of women. Finally, he reports that, during the last few years of his stay in the Konde country, he saw Konde houses being built under increasing influence of the coastal culture, in imitation of the Swahili houses. They were roughcast with mud inside and out, and had a verandah supported by posts.

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In 1955, many ikhaya could be seen. Some were for the cattle, but most were dwelling houses for married people. (Boys aged 7–10 and upwards until the marriageable age lived in ramshackle boys' houses, the material of which was not bamboo, but a thinner grass, resembling bamboo very much. These houses stood

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14: Lehmann E-5 (1939)1951 FN17 Ngonde FN17
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# Notes on the daily life of the Nyakyusa (Tanganyika Territory)

Cf. Sociologus 1951, I, 1 S. 53 ff.

By F. Rudolf Lehmann

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*1. Greetings.* The first thing to strike a visitor to the Nyakyusa country north of Lake Nyasa on passing through one of the numerous picturesque villages surrounded by banana groves is the way of greeting customary among these people. "*Ukuponya*" is the Nyakyusa word for "to greet". In the morning you are greeted with the exclamation: "*uponile* (pl. *mwaponile*)", which literally means: "Did you sleep well?" And you may answer in the same way, or, in fuller form as you can hear it from the mouth of the natives: "*ase ndaga, uponile*", or "*uponile yoyoque*". "*ase ndaga*" may be used with all answers, meaning: thanks! At noon or in the afternoon you will hear: "*uvombide*", you have worked, or, have you worked? Then, according to the case, you may answer: "*muvombide asanda*", you, men, have worked, or, generally: "*muvangere*", which is equivalent to the Swahili: "*habari gani?*". If you greet a person in the evening with the words: "*uponaga*", may you sleep well, the person thus addressed will answer: "*kaponai*".

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*2. Milking.* The first task in the daily life of the Nyakyusa people is for the men to milk the cows. This is done in the morning before the cattle are driven out to graze and again in the evening when they return. But the cattle are also driven back to the village at noon when they are usually fumigated standing in the smoke of a fire for which cow dung and banana leaves are used, a process designed to remove vermin from the skin of the cattle. The animals seem to be very fond of this procedure. They stand quietly in the smoke gazing at the passers-by.

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*3. Hoeing.* "Hoeing is the work of men, planting weeding, reaping is the work of women. The men, young and old, hoe for about four hours on most mornings of the year; in the lower altitudes they begin well before sunrise and finish about 9 a. m., on the upland plateau they

14: Lehmann E-5 (1939) 1951 FN17 Ngonde FN17
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begin later and continue till noon or beyond. The energetic ones sometimes hoe again for an hour or two in the late afternoon. Different crops are planted at different seasons of the year so that there is always some hoeing to be done." (G. Wilson, Introduction, p. 260).

The putting of maize-grains as seed into the earth is the women's work, the sowing of millet *(malesi)* of both sexes. If you ask the men after they had come home from their work: *"Mukumbide ifivanya fya nongi?"*, "Whose fields did you hoe?", the answer often may be: *"Tukumbide ifivanya fya tata!"* We have hoed the fields of our father.

In former times, the Nyakyusa had a lot of ceremonies relating to the beginning of the hoeing season and of the beginning of the harvest-work. They are, however, nowadays nearly extinguished under the influence of European culture.

With respect to the beginning of the hoeing season, a very comprehensive ceremony had to be carried out by the chief in community whith the *unganga* (medicine man) for providing the fields with extraordinary *(-sisya)* power *(amaka)*: *amaka amasisya*, in this case: fertility.

When the crop was ripe, it was (at first) *forbidden (mwiko)* to take anything from the crop before the chief had given the permission. First the oldest male villagers informed the chief that it may be now the just time to give the crop free for the people, saying: "The people is hungry, we will now give them to eat!" Then the chief ordered that 6 or 8 (maize') corn-cobs were brought to him, and he sent these corn-cobs by a messenger to the (holy) offering-grove where they must be put down. After that has been correctly executed, he gave the permission for reaping the new crop.

(NB. It was believed that those corn-cobs put into the offering-grove were eaten especially from the leopards. The powderes bones of the leopards were considered important ingredients of the consecration drink which the chief had to take at his initiation ceremonies and which should give him the strength *(amaka)* of a leopard, so that he also was called "the leopard" or "the leopard chief".)

4. *Herding the Cattle and Cleansing the Stable.* The sociological importance of cattle among the Nyakyusa and the specific practice among them of herding the cattle by herdboys, that is also of highly sociological importance for the structure of the Nyakyusa society, is already described by G. Wilson (Introduction, p. 269 f).

The cleansing of the stables of which the Nyakyusa possess a great number of very well built ones, which have also sometimes a considerable length — apart from the cattle kraals —, is the task of

14: Lehmann E-5 (1939)1951 FN17 Ngonde FN17
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233 343 462 [413] the women, but the men are responsible for keeping the floor of the stable in good repair. For this purpose a specific tool is used, called ukutobe indobelu. It is round on top, flattened on the lower side and provided with a handle.

224 5. *Hunting.* Sometimes the Nyakyusa go out to hunt, but nowadays hunting is much more restricted than in former times as described e. g by Mackenzie in his book: "The spirit-ridden Konde" (London 1925). This record, however, deals mostly with the Ngonde of the environment of Karonga whose interesting social history was unsurpassably revealed to us by Mr. Godfrey Wilson's treatise: "The Constitution of Ngonde" (The Rhodes-Livingstone Papers, Number Three. Livingstone, [654] Northern Rhodesia 1939.) Hunting in the Nyakyusa country is now curtailed by governmental regulations. Hunting (*ukufuma*), therefore, does not supply an essential part of the food requirements of the [136] natives. The colobus apes on the slopes of the Rungwe volcano and the [654] Poroto Mountains are sometimes killed for their attractive black and white skins, but fortunately this is now forbidden by the government. [439] Otherwise these apes would be exterminated in quite a short time, since the skins of these apes are in great demand with some Europeans for rugs and covers. Naturally, the hunting of lions and especially of leopards, which even nowadays still cause great damage, is not restricted.

224 231 The hunting of game for food is often done with dogs (*imbwa*) which have small bells (*ingesi*) on collars round their necks. Thereby the hunter (*umfuemi*) always knows the whereabouts of his dog. The chase is continued till the dog or dogs are exhausted. The object of the hunt (*umfuemu*) is generally a small type of antelope (*ikaeya*), e. g. in the [654] environment of Mwakalelo, as I was instructed. The usual time for hunting is the cooler season, but to-day a permit of the government is also required.

223 Catching birds by means of traps (*untepu*, pl. *imitepu*) is still common in the Nyakyusa area. I have also seen such traps constructed by means of the flicking-gallow's principle also in the vicinity of Utengule among the Safwa. The herd boys especially set traps to catch quails (*imbesi*) when the malesi (millet) harvest is over. Sometimes smaller birds are also coursed until they are exhausted and then slain. One day I found a stick vertically put on the soil and with a triangle made of smaller sticks at its top. The horizontal part of which was smeared with an adhesive substance. I was told that this was a trap for birds.

14: Lehmann E-5 (1939) 1951 FN17 Ngonde FN17
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but I was astonished that this trap was erected relatively near to my tent on the border of the village of Katumba.

6. *Fishing.* Fishing is a much more common practice with the Nyakyusa than hunting. The old-established custom of poisoning fish in their smaller rivers is still widely used. The poison is derived from the *unkevedu* shrup. Its branches and leaves are broken off, reduced to small pieces between stones and then packed in a covering of grass to resemble a long cigar about 1 meter in length and 25 cm in width. The bundles prepared in such a manner are fixed between two rowes of stones placed across the river for this purpose. The poison gradually diffuses into the water, which takes on a green colour. The fish are soon affected by the poison and rise to the surface with gaping mouths. They are then easily caught with a scoop made from bamboo. The open end of a piece of bamboo is split into several sections and the splinters are bent apart and tied together with raffia to form a sort of funnel[1]. The fish are strung through their gills on small pliable sticks and roasted at home over a fire. All people are allowed to join in this fishing which to them is always a festive occasion in the cooler season.

Fishing in broader and deeper rivers, such as the lower Kiwira, is done by means of large fish-traps. They are made and repaired by men on the banks of the river. The traps are attached to poles rammed into the bed and almost invariably boats trying to reach the Lake Nyasa get struck on submerged poles. These large fish-traps strung across the river form quite an impressive sight. Looking up-stream, they look like the bows of little ships standing in a row.

7. *Preparing food.* With the Nyakusa the preparation of food is an exclusively the task of the women, that R. Thurnwald ist quite correct when says (Black and White in East Africa, London 1935, p. 157): "Menfolk starve if there are no women to prepare their meals". There is thus a very strong division of labour between the sexes, also noticable in the carrying of loads. For a young man to carry the load of an old woman or his sweetheart, whom perchance he might meet on the road, would be a grave violation of a rigid custom.

As the preparation of the food is the women's duty, also the grinding (*ukutika*) of the corn in a mortar (*ikitali*) with a pestle (*ikitwe*) which is the exclusive task of the female sex. The wife is always the first to rise in the morning to prepare breakfast. Usually, however, this is not

[1] NB. They are of the same kind as those of the Hottentots along the Great Fish River in South West Africa.

14:Lehmann E-5 (1939)1951 FN17 Ngonde FN17
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very substantial, the main meal being taken in the evening shortly before sunset.

*8. Manufacture.* The pot for cooking (*indeku*) is placed on three stones which form the hearth (*ikipembero*, hearth stones). The flat bowl made of clay used for the needs of the kitchen is called *ulweegabia* and a pig pot used for storing water *ingumbe*. The pots of clay are manufactured by Kisi women because in their land on the north-eastern shores of Lake Nyassa the best clay is found. In the eastern part of the Nyakyusa country adjacent to Kisi land the women visit the pottery markets of the Kisi, but to the remoter villages, e. g. around the Rungwe volcano the pottery is brought by Kisi men. In this case, owing to the great distance from the Kisi-Land the men carry the loads of eight to ten pots on their head between split poles of bamboo. The Kisi pots I saw in the Rungwe Station were ornamented in a rough way with red ochre and seemed only slightly baked. The hearth stones, however, are made by the Nyakyusa women themselves as I was able to observe near Rutenganio, where widows manufactured them for sale.

In many villages of the Nyakyusa I could watch basket-making. This I saw being done by men. In the chief's hut in Katumba I had the opportunity to admire a great number of very big baskets (*ifituba*) for storing grain, smeared with cow dung on the outside. The attractive closely wickered baskets, which are filled with malesi (millet) and then placed in water for a night in the process of beer-brewing were originally made by the Bunyi, but nowadays also the Nyakyusa are said to be skilled enough to weave them. I had no opportunity to observe it, but could acquire an excellent specimen of that wicker-work.

*9. The Meal.* At the beginning of each meal the hands are washed, including those of children. The men take their meal separately from the women. The wives only eat when their husbands have been satisfied. Boys under ten years eat with their mothers, but as soon as they begin to live in age-set villages, they eat together with their friends of their own age-set, as described in detail by Mr. G. Wilson in his "Introduction of Nyakyusa Society" (Bantu Studies X, p. 311). The head of the family likes to eat together with his friends.

Meat is eaten very seldom, but on special occasions such as marriages, death lamentations, christenings of Christianized natives, enormous quantities are devoured. *Inyama* (Swahili: *nyama*) is the Nyakyusa word for all sorts of meat, *ingombe* for that of cattle and *ingumbulu* for that of oxen. Near Ujenguie I saw black pigs (*ingurwe*, pig)

14: Lehmann E-5 (1939) 1951 FN17 Ngonde FN17
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the figures. Also bicycles, aeroplanes, motor-cars and other striking objects of the European civilization are to be found represented and concentric white circles adjacent to these drawings or paintings.

*14. Houses.* Sometimes the upper portion of the framework of the rectangular houses is not fully plastered with mud leaving broad open areas or strips horizontally or slopingly to the base-line. This may have its origin in an artistic motive and at the same time be useful in ventilating the interior of the hut. The ancient custom of the Nyakyusa to fill out the spaces between the framework of the walls with flat, oval cakes or clods of clay, supported inside the house by a second framework of bamboo (*uzumango*), has also a decorative effect.

The preparation of these oval sun-dried clay cakes is the work of the women. L. Monteith Fotheringham described this in his "Adventures in Nyasaland" (London 1891, p. 22) with the following words: "The women make the bricks in shape like large eggs by pressing the clay between their hands." The building of the framework of the hut and the thatching of the roof is the task of the men. Nyumba means "the house" in Kinyakyusa as well as in Swahili; *isyenga* is the name for the old-fashioned hut of the Nyakyusa possessing a round baseline and a framework expanding upwards in diameter. The rectangular hut is called *ikibaga* and the smaller rectangular hut used as a store or a fowl pen, *akabaga*. It is interesting to note that there is no special word for roof in Kinyakyusa. This part of the hut or house is simply called "the above" (*igulu*). In contrast to this fact the different poles of the roof-structure are specially named according to their position parallel to or at right angels to the ridge of the rectangular houses. *Ukutalike* means to bind the different rafters of the roof together; *imbanda* is the name for the supporting poles of the roof, and *isyenga* for the poles of the framework of the walls.

*15. Outfit.* Inside the house we find besides the bedsteads (*ikitara*, pl. (*tilara*) and the household utensils, the grinding-mill (*urusaga*), consisting of an upper (smaller) and a lower (broader) stone. The flour falls into a basket placed in front of the mill. Sometimes in a corner of the hut a nest (*ikitara*) for a sitting hen on top of a pole is to be found. Outside the house is a place for the sweepings (*urutagililo*). The cleaning of the interior of the houses and also the repairing of the mud plaster is the task of the women, but I saw men cleaning the space in front of the huts. At any case, it must be acknowledged that the cleanliness of a Nyakyusa village leaves little to be desired.